

**Indiana Trails Advisory Board
September 5, 2013 - 3:00 PM
Krueger Memorial Park
801 Liberty Trail, Michigan City, IN 46360**

Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present:

All Terrain Vehicle Users - Neil McCammack
Bicyclists - Judy Lee (proxy)
Equestrians - Lawrence Turnquist (proxy)
Four Wheel Drive Users - Ryan Sweany
Higher Education/Health - John McNichols
Hikers - Pete Banta (proxy)
Off-Road Motorcyclists - Tom Hartman
Parks & Recreation Agencies - Shannon Eason
(proxy)
Pedestrians - Pat Martin
Snowmobilers - Craig Erickson (proxy)
Trail Support Groups - Melisa Culbertson
Water Trail Users - Dan Plath

Members not present:

Environmental groups
Mountain Bikers
Pedestrians
Users with Disabilities

DNR Staff:

David Cox

Guests:

Renee Cox
Roy Garrett – ABATE
Jay Jackson - ABATE
Marlo Sweany
Gary Williams – ABATE

Welcome

Vice Chairman Dan Plath welcomed everyone. He thanked Shannon Eason with Michigan City Parks & Recreation for hosting the meeting/lunch/tour with the Northwest Indiana Paddlers Association.

Introductions

Everyone introduced themselves.

Review and Approval of June 2013 Minutes

Pat Martin moved to approve the minutes. John McNichols seconded. Motion carried.

Department Report

David Cox thanked Dan Plath with NWIPA and Shannon Eason with Michigan City Parks & Recreation for hosting the meeting and arranging the land and water trails tours. He said the ADA compliance presentation by Shannon Eason will not be repeated during the meeting since it was presented during lunch to the board. The slideshow will be available for anyone who missed the presentation. He also passed along regards from TAB chairwoman Yvette Rollins who is out of state on a trail ride. RTP - David reminded the board that each year states now have the ability to opt out of RTP funding. At this point, Indiana has not opted out. TAB is not allowed to lobby but individuals and groups may do so but cannot do it on behalf of TAB. The board is legislatively neutral by design. Dan Plath asked if groups could thank the state for not opting out. David said it was a good idea for user

groups or individuals to let the state know what they think on matters. Groups just cannot do it on behalf of TAB. He encouraged groups to be involved however they feel on issues. Several members asked where the RTP funds go if the state opts out. David said the state still gets the money but can use it for other transportation projects such as roads and bridges.

Old Business

Hoosier Outdoor Experience – TAB was encouraged to participate in the event as volunteers with their user groups. If your group is not committed, you can still volunteer with another group. It takes hundreds of volunteers for a successful event.

2013 Trails Conference Planning – Dan Plath asked David to give a brief overview of the conference for those proxies not familiar with it. The board was reminded the trails conference is the responsibility of TAB. Melody Jones soon will be getting an updated registration count to Yvette Rollins. It's important for everyone to get registered now and not wait until later. David said people not paying by credit/debit card can pay via check. The DNR is only in a supportive role so it's TAB duty to make this a successful event. This is an opportunity to learn different aspects of trail development. David said everything that must be discussed about the conference needs to be decided today since there are no more in-person TAB meetings before the event. He said there should be conference call meetings leading up to November.

Neil McCammack said he needs the address for registrations because he knows people who need to pay by check and can't do it online. He asked if there has been any consideration to allow LCRP people to attend at no cost since the conference is at LCRP. This would allow them to be trained like the DNR staff without cost. David replied that it was for TAB to decide. He said the donation of LCRP rental fees for the event was serving as the match. The board was reminded again this was a conference it's hosting not the DNR. Tom Hartman recommended LCRP put together the total cost donation of the park for the event including the property rental, staff time, camping costs, et cetera. Gary Williams said they would have staff on the property but didn't know how many at this time. Pat Martin asked how many would attend the training. Gary replied it could be any number so it's hard to determine.

Melisa Culbertson asked how many people were registered. David said registration numbers should be received soon from Melody Jones. Melisa felt if registrations were low a few more people such as LCRP staff would help with attendance numbers. The goal is 100 paying registrants. Tom Hartman moved to allow the LCRP to send up to 10 staff to the trails conference for training. Pat Martin seconded. Motion carried.

Melisa reported on the food arrangements she and Yvette have discussed. She said a simple way to feed 100+ people without worrying about health permits, liability insurance, refrigeration, and other preparations is using a food truck. Food trucks already meet the needed requirements while offering variety. Meals are provided with registration so it would lock in a price. If someone wanted more food than included with the registration, they could purchase it. She said Yvette was also contacting some vendors about food options. Gary Williams stated Yvette might be contacting the vendors in the LCRP area that offer good food for area events. These vendors are reasonably priced. Melisa said whoever provides the food should be professional so we don't have to do it ourselves. Judy Lee

talked about how the South Bend area bicyclists do their events with area restaurants taking on a meal. Gary explained that it might not work because LCRP is in such a remote area. Dan Plath recommended the food committee make the final decisions when Yvette returns.

Pete Banta said he registered online but never received a confirmation. David answered it's an issue that needs to be resolved. He has already discussed it with Yvette so she has let IPRA know about the situation. Pete asked if the chainsaw training would be included in the trails conference. David said a chainsaw training class at the conference would be a basic class in usage and safety. He said the official national certification training requires 2-4 days of intense training. Dan Plath explained the National Parks Service gave the paddlers a half day course but the Hoosier National Forest might be able to give the training. David said Yvette has much experience and many contacts with the National Forest Service. Melisa suggested a TAB conference call soon with Yvette concerning some of these matters. The DNR is willing to facilitate a call whenever TAB wants one. Gary stated there are many limbs, brush to practice with at LCRP. Nearly every group uses chainsaws at some point so it's vital to learn. David asked if there is anything else that TAB feels must be included in the training.

Neil asked if shuttles have been discussed since there will be 100-150 people needing transported around the facility. Gary replied that the LCRP shuttles will be used for the event. There was discussion concerning LCRP being open for public use during the trails conference. The consensus was to keep the property open. Areas used for the training would be marked off. TAB was reminded conference attendees can stay at the Bedford Super 8 at a discounted rate. Ryan Sweany asked if ORVs were needed for the event. ATVs and off-road motorcycles are permitted but LCRP doesn't allow four-wheel drive vehicles on trails. The speakers are coming in on Thursday, November 7 to check out the property for conference trail building areas. TAB members are encouraged to join the speakers when they walk the property. David said the conference flyer should be sent out electronically again to user groups for advertisement. Neil said it should be posted on the Outdoor Recreation facebook page. Illinois users should be notified too. Roy Garrett said now is the time to promote the event. David said Yvette has worked tirelessly on the conference planning to make sure it's successful. He encouraged TAB members to do their part to support the conference like Yvette has done because it's TAB's responsibility. The board members need to make sure they write down what they think must be covered in the conference call so everything is included in the meeting.

New Business

Brief ADA compliance comments – Shannon Eason, Michigan City Parks – The presentation was given during lunch so Ric Edwards could listen to the information since he couldn't stay for the meeting. Shannon gave a great overview of what Michigan City is doing to make sure its park system is ADA compliant. The video is available to anyone who requests it. Michigan City is becoming a state leader in accessibility. Dan Plath said the city is visionary when it comes to public access. David stated that Ric Edwards is a good resource for user groups who have accessibility questions/issues.

User Group Reports

All Terrain Vehicle Users – Neil McCammack said there may be something being worked out concerning the Redbird insurance problems. He is not at liberty to discuss details at this time.

Bicyclists – Judy Lee reported bicyclists are working on connectivity issues around the state.

Equestrians – Lawrence Turnquist said most equestrian trail development is in southern Indiana. He stressed the importance of multi-use trails.

Four Wheel Drive Users – Ryan Sweany said there have been several events at Redbird such as a Hi-Lift Jack event that packed the property. The night rides were cancelled this year due to insurance reasons. He asked for solutions to this matter. Craig Erickson recommended they contact V & V Insurance in Iowa since it insures snowmobile trails reasonably. Ryan also talked briefly about the progress at Interlake. Toys for Tots will be held again this year.

Higher Education/Health – John McNichols encouraged user groups to work with colleges/universities on trail projects and studies. This is nice benefit for trail enthusiasts to get projects off the ground and gives students needed real world experience. Students are also great resources for volunteers.

Hikers – Pete Banta stated the hikers are working on a project to connect the T.C. Steele State Memorial to the Tecumseh Trail in Brown County.

Off-Road Motorcyclists – Tom Hartman reported the University of Evansville has been working on a project to extend the Evansville Greenway to Newburgh. Interlake will be hosting an event which will draw 500 riders. Twelve new miles of single track trail are completed at Interlake. Construction at Interlake is progressing nicely.

Parks & Recreation Agencies – No report given.

Pedestrians – Pat Martin reported they are working on a 2-mile trail extension along the Wabash River. A feasibility study has been completed for a bike/pedestrian trail in Terre Haute.

Snowmobilers – Craig Erickson said OHV restrictions in national forests and lands are a top concern for snowmobilers across the country. Snowmobilers are preparing for the winter riding season.

Trail Support Groups – Melisa Culbertson said she is willing to help groups with property acquisition issues. She said universities sometimes are willing to hold title for land to be used for trail properties.

Water Trail Users – Dan Plath reported that Michigan City and Hobart will soon have ADA access points. Lake Michigan Water Trail is still being extended. Kankakee River will soon have camping areas only accessible from the water for paddlers. An inventory has been completed of water trails in NWI to determine what needs to be done.

Announcements

Hoosier Outdoor Experience – September 21-22, 2013

Mid America Trails and Greenways Conference – October 27-30, 2013 (Chicago)

- MATAG brochures were handed out

Trails for All Conference – November 8-10, 2013 (Lawrence Co. Rec. Park)

Future Meeting Dates

December 5 – Indiana Government Center South

Adjournment

John McNichols moved for adjournment. Melisa Culbertson seconded. Motion carried.